

Chapter 6

Historic Preservation

BACKGROUND

Northside Village has a long and colorful history dating back to the late 1800's. It was once part of the Fifth Ward, which was carved out of the First and Second wards north of Buffalo Bayou and east of White Oak Bayou (wards were once political districts; now, the term "ward" is used to describe a geographic area of the City).

Residential Historic Resources

The earliest plats were the Ryon (also known as Germantown), Chapman First and Irvinton (named after J. Irvin) plats. The Chapman First plat (1861) included the warehouse district south of IH 10 (see Appendix E for more detail about the history of Northside Village). Within these subdivisions are homes that reflect development of the period.

Transportation Historic Resources

In 1850, rail came to Houston and because of the availability of large tracts of undeveloped land, the Northside Village area became the site of the majority of rail lines and the Southern Pacific Railroad facilities in this part of the City. The earliest public transportation in this neighborhood was a mule-drawn car. This was followed in 1892 by electric rail service along N. Main (formerly known as Montgomery), which later was extended to a loop service, providing access directly to the Southern Pacific rail shops. The electric rail was replaced by jitney service and eventually absorbed by METRO bus service.

In 1913, the Main Street viaduct, designed by F.L. Dormant, opened and was hailed as the "gateway to the Northside". In later years, the McKee Street bridge provided another connection to downtown.

Nonresidential Historic Resources

A number of commercial buildings (dating back to the early 1900's), schools such as Jefferson Davis and Lee elementary and two cemeteries (Hollywood Cemetery and Holly Cross Cemetery) still stand today which contribute to the history of the area.

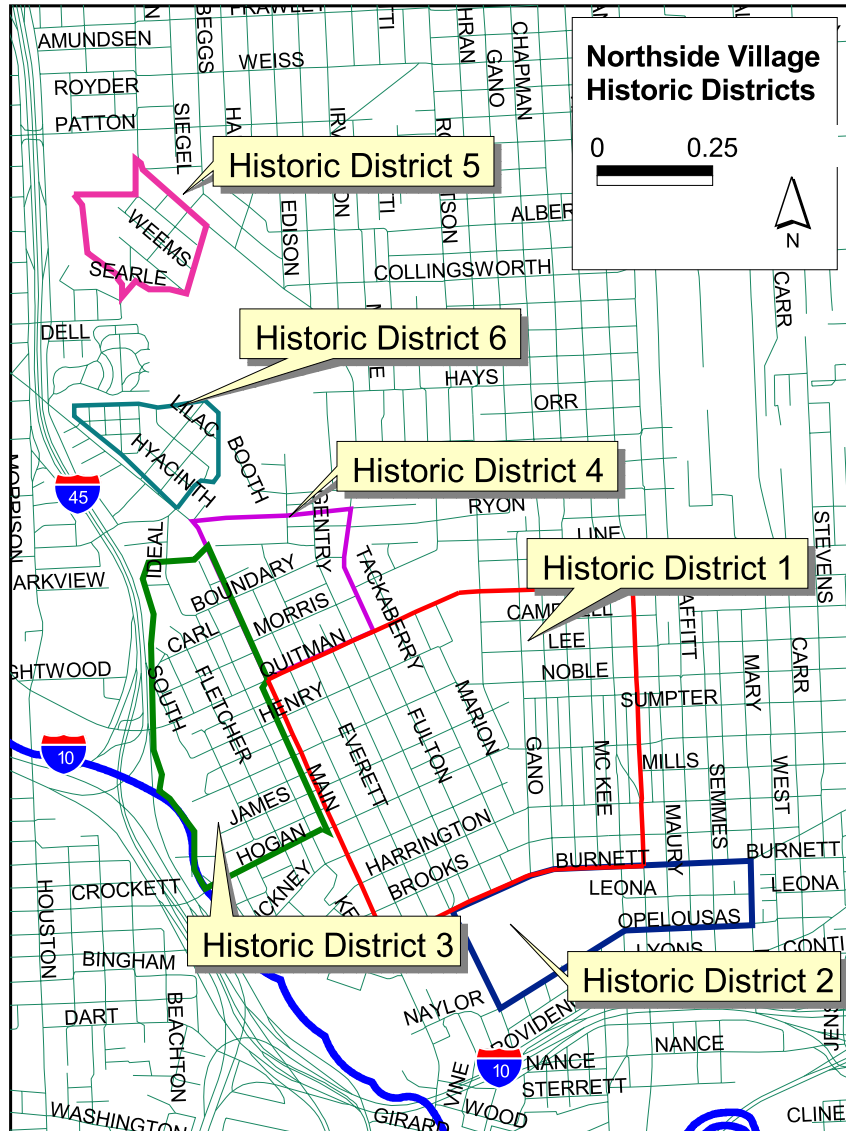
Potential Historic Districts

Within Northside Village, six areas have the potential for being designated historic districts. An area can be designated a historic district through the City of Houston's Historic Preservation Ordinance and/or through the National Park Service National Register of Historic Places. New construction, demolition and additions to structures within historic districts designated by the City are subject to design review by the City's Archeological and Historical Commission. The following six areas contain significant historic structures to merit further study to determine if they can be designated historic districts, either at the local or federal level.

Potential Historic District 1

This district is the largest proposed and may be divided into smaller districts. It is bound by Burnett to the south; North Main to the west; Quitman to the north and Elysian to the east. This district includes portions of the following 19th and early 20th century plats: Noble (1867), Little and Dickinson (1889), Cascara (1890) and A. C. Allen (1911). The streets within this area are aligned in a grid pattern that fans slightly to correspond to major established north to south streets: Montgomery (now North Main) and Fulton and to the western boundary of White Oak Bayou.

Houses in this area mostly date from the 1880s and 1890s, with a healthy influx of early 20th-century bungalows and some later Ranch style houses. The Queen Anne style of architecture (the dominant style for domestic architecture from 1880 to 1910) is the dominant form in this area. During the first decades of the 20th century, the style remained popular and Queen Anne style



elements (such as porches) are often combined with the Colonial Revival houses.

Potential Historic District 2

This proposed historic district is industrial and includes the Southern Pacific rail shop buildings. The boundaries are roughly Maury to the east, Burnett to the north, Chestnut to the west and Opelousas to the south. Many of the buildings of the Southern Pacific rail shops were constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A map of the city of Houston from 1882 shows land purchased by the Texas and New Orleans Railroad out of the

1703 Chestnut Street,
Mission German Methodist
Episcopal Church, ca. 1892,
now Jerusalem del Cladic.
Gothic Revival elements
include intersecting gables,
pointed arched windows



Elaborate Queen Anne
style house



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William Burnett tract (below). Two years later, a convergence of tracks appears on an 1884 map and by 1891 the entire shop operation is visible on the bird's eye map.

Potential Historic District 3

This district, historically known as East Germantown, is residential in nature and encompasses the original Richter, Depenbrock, Schulz, Younger plats and parts of the A. C. Allen plat. The boundaries of this proposed district are White Oak Bayou to the north, Hogan to the south, IH 45 to the west; the eastern boundary is between North Main and Keene from Hogan to Quitman and then a jog to North Main from Quitman to the bayou. The neighborhoods in this area have many of the Queen Anne style cottages found in the rest of Northside Village, as well as; bungalows (early 20th century multi-family dwellings). Lee



*Southern Pacific Shops, early
20th century.**



Southern Pacific Shops 2001

Elementary School designed by Alfred C. Finn, and the Southern Pacific Hospital (now Thomas Street Clinic) are also located in this area.

Potential Historic District 4

This district is comprised of parts of the following plats: Droesche (year n/a), C. Allen (1911) and North Main St. (1912) plats. It is residential in nature and is located north of Quitman, East of N. Main, west of Fulton and south of Wilkes.

Potential Historic District 5 - Silverdale

This district encompasses almost all of the original plat of the Silverdale subdivision, platted in 1923 out of the Scott 500-acre tract. Originally, the neighborhood expanded across Fulton. Silverdale is a quiet neighborhood of modest bungalows and early 20th century cottages. This district's boundaries are: Moody Park on the east, Fulton to the north, Little White Oak Bayou to the south and the property line of the existing trucking service business on the northwest. This area is largely intact and has kept its historical character, due in part, to the fact that it can be accessed only through Fulton and Cottage Street. This coupled with the fact that many of the houses are owner-occupied gives the neighborhood a well-kept appearance. The large number of owner-



*An early 20th century
cottage with Colonial
Revival porch columns.*

**All historic maps and photographs courtesy Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library.*



The Southern Pacific Hospital, originally called the Sunset Hospital, was built as a staff hospital for the Southern Pacific rail shops. The E-shaped plan of the building was popular at the time of construction in 1911 because it maximized the number of rooms that could have exterior windows, an important feature in pre-air conditioned Houston.



Lee Elementary, Alfred C. Finn architect. Finn, one of Houston's prominent early 20th century architects is best known for the San Jacinto monument (1935–38), the Gulf Building (1927–29), the Sam Houston Music Hall and Coliseum (1935–38 - demolished 2000) and the Ezekiel W. Cullen Administration Building (1947–50), at the University of Houston's main campus.



An example of a high-style bungalow at the corner Boundary & Everett.



Built in 1939, this multi-family brick building has the name Hildebrandt over the entry door. This was a common practice in the early 20th century to name buildings of this type after the developer or owner.

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occupied houses and the neighborhood's small area is a plus in seeking historic designation.

Potential Historic District 6 - Glen Park

This unique neighborhood, Glen Park, was platted in the first or second decade of the 20th century. City directories show inhabitants as early as 1915. It sits on a bluff above Little White Oak Bayou and like Silverdale, is a gem of Northside Village. There are actually hills in this Houston neighborhood! Architecturally, the houses reflect their early 20th century construction dates and are largely bungalows and modest cottages. The streets are all named after flowers: Goldenrod, Hyacinth, Cosmos, Marigold, etc.



The first house built in Silverdale

Source: Silverdale resident, oral interview.



Unique 2-story Bungalow built in the 1930's by the German carpenter John F. Scholobohm. Houston City directories list John and Alvina Scholobohm at this address from the late 1930s to the late 1960s. Their daughter, Florence, was a keypunch operator at the Missouri Pacific Lines in the 1940s and 50s and then worked as a saleswoman for the W. T. Grant Company.